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T W O
LETTERS

To the Reverend

Dr. BENTLEY,
Master of *Trinity-College* in
C A M B R I D G E,

Concerning his Intended Edition of the
Greek Testament.

Together with the
Doctor's ANSWER,
A N D

Some Account of what may be
Expected from that Edition.

With a Particular Enquiry into Two Texts
of *St. Matth.* xix. 17. and xxvii. 9.

And that Famous one of *St. John*, 1 Epist. v. 7.
THERE ARE THREE *that bear Record*, &c.

LONDON: Printed for *John Morphew*,
near *Stationers-Hall*. 1717.

Price Six Pence.

TWO

LETTERS

To the Reverend

DR. BEATLEY

Master of Trinity College in

CAMBRIDGE

Concerning his intended Edition of the

Greek Testament

To be sent with the

Author's MSS. W. B. E.

AND

Some Account of what may be

expected from this Edition

With a Parallel Table of the two Texts
of St. Mark xxi. 17. and xxi. 18.

Author's Introduction of St. John's Epistle
I have been joined with Rev. A. B.

AND A. B. Printed for J. B. E.
New Street, 1841.

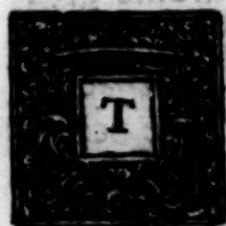


T W O
LETTERS

To the Reverend

Dr. *BENTLEY*.

WITH THE
Doctor's ANSWER, &c.



THE Reverend Dr. *Bentley* having honour'd me with an Answer to my *First Letter*, and therein given me more than I asked; and having also, in Compliance with my own Desire, returned that Letter; it may be censured, as *betraying Conversation*, that I publish either his Letter or my own.

B

But

But this may readily be accounted for, by these Motives for so doing.

1. The People of *Europe*, for now above 160 Years, have been taught to think, that Edition of the Greek Testament by *Stephens*, in 1550, was as correct as was possible; and therefore should any new Edition omit any Passage which *Stephens* has inserted, there may be danger of shocking the Authority of the Whole.

2. This Danger encreases in Proportion as the Author of such Edition bears a Character for Learning and Opportunity; and therefore must be very much increased by Dr. *Bentley's* Edition, if he should omit any thing.

There are Instances ready to produce, if necessary, that this Apprehension has too much Foundation. (1.) The Enemies of the Orthodox Faith assume great Advantages to themselves, from a supposed want of Authority, in that of *St. John*, 1 Ep. v. 7. which gave occasion to this Commerce: And they make repeated *Ovations* over that supposititious Defect; and take Occasions for them, from a Report, that Dr. *Bentley's* Edition will omit it. And then (2.) the Enemies of Revealed Religion find their Account

count in that which they desire may be
An Uncertainty in the Rule of Faith.

3. I am under an Obligation, by my Second Letter, not to write to Dr. Bentley any more; and therefore, for the Reasons above alledged, hold my self obliged to expose my Letters to the World, that some Learned Man or other may be induced thereby to move the Doctor to use some other Considerations, besides those mentioned in his Letter, for leading Men out of the Labyrinth of various Lectiōns.

Therefore I depend upon Dr. Bentley, that he will be well pleased with what I am doing: And only ask the Reader's Pardon, for giving him the Trouble of perusing Papers not intended for Publick View, and consequently not so correct as they ought to have been; for which, all the Atonement I can make, is, To assure him, I am ready to explain, or prove, or even retract any thing I have written, if I cannot prove it right.

LETTER I.

*Wherein the Authority of 1 John, v. 7,
is fully proved.*

To the Reverend Dr. Bentley.

Reverend SIR,

COMMON Fame tells me, you are upon a New Edition of the Greek Testament, and intend to omit that of *St. John*, *Ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσι κλ. 1 Ep. v. 7*, Though I have not the Honour to be personally known to you, the Importance of the Subject forces me to write what I think is an Evidence for the Text, which I beg you to accept favourably, and consider **what** is written, without enquiring **who** writes.

§. 1. *The Paragraph in this Chapter, from v. 9, to v. 15 inclusive, is agreed to be Genuin; and (in my Opinion) proves the Text in Question, to be in like manner Genuin. That Paragraph is thus in my*
Ver.

* Ver. 9. Ὅτι αὕτη ἔστιν ἡ Μαρτυρία τῷ Θεῷ ἣν μεμαρτύρηκε περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ.

10. Ὁ πισδύων εἰς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἔχει καὶ μαρτυρίαν ἐν αὐτῷ· Ὁ μὴ πισεύων τῷ Θεῷ ψεύστην, πεποίηκεν αὐτὸν ὅτι καὶ πεπισδύκεν εἰς τὴν μαρτυρίαν, ἣν μεμαρτύρηκεν ὁ Θεὸς περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ.

11. Καὶ αὕτη ἔστιν ἡ Μαρτυρία, ὅτι Ζωὴ αἰώνιον ἔδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ Θεός, καὶ αὕτη ἡ Ζωὴ ἐν τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ ἔστιν.

12. Ὁ ἔχων τὸν υἱόν, ἔχει καὶ Ζωὴν· ὁ μὴ ἔχων τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ Ζωὴν οὐκ ἔχει.

13. Ταῦτα ἔγραψα ὑμῖν τοῖς πισδύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ· ἵνα εἰδῇτε ὅτι Ζωὴν ἔχετε αἰ-

* The Version of this Passage is,

Ver. 9, 10. This is the Testimony of God, which he hath testified concerning his Son. He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the Testimony by him. He that believeth not God, maketh him a Lyar, because he believeth not in the Testimony which God hath testified of his Son.

Ver. 11, 12. And this is the Record, that God hath given us eternal Life : and this Life is by his Son. He that hath the Son hath Life ; he that hath not that Son of God, hath not that Life.

Ver. 13. These Things have I written to you that believe in the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal Life, and that ye may believe in the Name of the Son of God.

Ver. 14, 15. And this is the Confidence which we have towards him, that if we ask any thing according to his Will, he heareth us. And if we know he heareth us, whatever we ask, we know we have the Petitions which we have put up to him.

ωνιον, κ' εἶνα πισδῆσι εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τῷ υἱῷ τῷ
Θεῷ.

14. Καὶ αὐτὴ ὁρὴν ἡ παρρησία ἣν ἔχομεν πρὸς
αὐτὸν, ὅτι εἰάν τι αἰτώμεθα κατὰ τὸ θέλημα αὐ-
τοῦ, ἀκούει ἡμῶν.

15. Καὶ εἰάν οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀκούει ἡμῶν, ὁ αὖν αἰ-
τώμεθα, οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἔχομεν τὰ αἰτήματα ἃ ἠτήκαμεν
παρ' αὐτοῦ.

§. 2. *The Record here referred to begins at v. 6. and takes in the Text in Question. I will put it down with the various Lections in different Ink, * to be omitted or read as it deserves.*

Ver. 6. † Οὗτος [Ἰησοῦς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, mention-
ed in the last preceding Clause] ὁρὴν ὁ ἐλθὼν διὰ
τοῦ ὕδατος κ' αἵματος, ἸΗΣΟΥΣ ὁ Χριστός· ἐκ οὗ τὰς
ὑποδείξεις

* Thus the Letter in which the Words in Question were
put in Red-Ink.

† Ver. 6. This Person (Jesus the Son of God) is
he that came by Water and Blood, J E S U S, the Christ ;
not in the Water only, but in the Water and in the Blood,
[and in the Spirit, *] Now it is the Spirit that beareth
Witness, because that Spirit is the Truth.

7. For there are Three that bear Witnesses in Heaven,
the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost ; and these
Three Persons are One

8. And there are Three that bear Witnesses on Earth,
the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood ; and these Three
are in that One

ὕδατι μόνον, ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ ὕδατι καὶ ἐν τῷ αἵματι,
[καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι *] καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ὅτι τὸ μαρτυ-
ροῦν ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν ἡ ἀλήθεια.

7. Ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῷ ἁ-
ρανῶ, ὁ πατήρ, καὶ ὁ λόγος, καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα· καὶ
ἐτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἐν εἰσί.

8. Καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῇ, τὸ
πνεῦμα, καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸ αἷμα· καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἐν
εἰσιν.

*Other Variations are not of Consequence
to the Question.*

* My Book has not this, but Beza has noted it to be
in some of his Manuscripts.

§. 3. *The first and last* of these various
Lectons may be determined by the Re-
cord itself. Perspicuity requires to begin
with *the Last*. The Omission of εἰς τὸ (a)
makes the 8th Verse affirm, *the Spirit,
and Water, and Blood, to be One Thing*;
which is contrary to Truth, if we take
ὕδωρ and αἷμα (b) in the common Accep-
tion; and if we take them for *Things in
which Christ came*, as it is manifest from
ver. 6. they may be taken, then by the same
6th ver. *they are very distinct*. Christ may
be confessed to come in *the Water, and*

(a) *In that.*

(b) *Water and Blood,*

not

not in the Blood. And by this Verse they must be *distinct Witnesses*, therefore they cannot be *EN* One thing, but εἰς τὸ ἐν (a) they may be.

As to the first various Reading the Addition καὶ ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι (b) in v. 6. the *Justness* of it will appear, when the Meaning of the Word Πνεῦμα (c) is settled.

1. The Clause Πνεῦμα ὅστις ἡ ἀλήθεια (d) seems in other words to express what Christ himself says, *John* iv. 23. Πνεῦμα ὁ Θεός. (e) And then it will signify the Substance of God: That Truth which is the self-existent Substance, the Author and Preserver of all Substance, and consequently Omniscient and Infallible; and so the best Witness: *The Spirit that beareth Witness, because that Spirit is the Truth.*

2. The Word Πνεῦμα (f) in ver. 8. seems determin'd by the Clause εἰς τὸ ἐν εἰσι (g) to differ from the same Word in the Clause before named in ver. 6. (1.) *That which is in any thing must differ from that in which it is.* And εἰς in this Author is *in*, εἰς τὸ κοιλίον τοῦ πατρὸς, *In the Bosom of the Father.* (2.) *Ev* (h) has no Substantive,

(a) In that one. (b) And in the Spirit. (c) Spirit.
 (d) The Spirit is the Truth. (e) God is a Spirit.
 (f) Spirit. (g) Are in that one. (h) One.

Save Πνεῦμα (i) in a preceding Clause. (3.)
 Πνεῦμα (i) in this Clause is so in that
 Πνεῦμα (i) in v. 6. as ὕδωρ & αἷμα (k)
 are therein. Now these are therein by
Voluntary Assumption, which cannot be
 said of the Spirit which is the Truth.
 (4.) This very Epistle uses the Word to
 denote *the Prophetick Office*, Chap. iv. 1.
Believe not every Spirit, but Try the Spi-
rits whether they are of God, because ma-
ny false Prophets are gone out. Now this
 Sense of the Word agrees with the other
 Words in this Clause, for *the Prophetick*
Office is in the Substance of God, as the
Water and the Blood, in which Christ
came, are in that Substance; for as Christ
 came voluntarily in the Water, and in the
 Blood, so also he came in the Prophetick
 Office. And since that Office gives us
 the Knowledge of the Regal and Sacerdo-
 tal Offices, which Three make up the
 Mediatorial Office of Christ, it will be no
 Force upon the Term Πνεῦμα (i) as used
 by this Apostle, if we take it to denote
the Mediatorial Office, when (as in the
 Text before us) *it is spoken of Christ.*

Now therefore, since in ver. 8. *the*
Spirit or Mediatorial Office of Christ, the

(i) Spirit.

(k) Water and Blood.

Water, and the Blood, in which he came, are Witnesses of his coming; and are in that One Spirit or Substance of God which beareth Witness; One may conclude he is said in ver. 6. to come, as not only in the Water, but in the Water and the Blood, and also in the (Mediatorial Office, or) Spirit, especially since the naming the Term Spirit in this Clause, naturally leads to the naming it again in that next Clause, in which it was never doubted in the Greek Copies to have been originally.

Hence I conclude my Book ought to be amended with the Addition in ver. 6. as noted there, and that the 8th Verse ought to stand as it does.

S. IV. *The 7th Verse (as I take it) may be proved authentick, by the Account of the Record given in the recited Paragraph, from ver. 9. to ver. 15. which sets forth the Record to be —*

1. *The Testimony of God the Father concerning his Son, ver. 9, 10.*

2. *An Evidence that God has given eternal Life by his Son, ver. 11, 12.*

3. *The Account of the Record says it is laid before us, that we may know the Son of God, and have eternal Life by him, ver. 13. And also that —*

4. — *We*

4. — *We may be assured he will give us what we ask according to his Will ; because by this Record we are assured he is capable of hearing what we say, and knowing what we silently desire, ver. 14, 15. Omnipresent and Omniscient.*

§. V. Now if we compare the Record with this Account thereof, *the 7th Verse will appear necessary, to make them consistent ; and consequently must be authentic as the Record it self, and as this Account thereof.*

1. *The Account of the Record makes it a Testimony of God the Father concerning his Son. The Record itself, without the 7th Verse, is evidently the Testimony of the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood ; none of which appear by the Record to be God the Father ; but the Two latter most evidently relate to Christ, and so also does the first, if my Explanation is right.*

But now with the 7th Verse, the whole is plain and self-consistent. The Spirit beareth Witness ; The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, ἑτοί οἱ τρεῖς, these Three Persons are One Spirit. The Spirit (or Mediatorial Office of Christ,) the Water or Shecinah in which he appear'd to the Patriarchs †) and the Blood (or humane

† See beneath. A. in §. VII.

*Nature, *) these Three (Witnesses) are in that One Spirit. And therefore since the Spirit is the Truth (or Substance,) and is the Witness as it is the Truth, or Substance, the Testimony of every Person in this Substance, and of every thing in every one of these Persons, is the Testimony of the Substance. And now since this Substance subsisteth in the Person of God the Father directly without Generation or Proceeding; therefore the Testimony of the Substance is the Testimony of God the Father.*

2. *The Account of the Record makes it an Evidence, that God has given us eternal Life by his Son. But no such thing appears in the Record, if the 7th Verse is omitted. This Gift of eternal Life must be either as a free Gift, or as a Grant for a valuable Consideration. The Word ἑδωκε [Hath given] is in the latter Sense in some places treating of this Subject. [See C.] And the Tenor of the whole Scriptures confines it to that Sense. By the Sin of Adam we are all under Sentence of Death eternal; by the Blood of Christ we are redem'd from that Sentence. The Value of the Blood of Christ depends upon this, **That it is his***

* See beneath. B. in §. VII.

own ; and it cannot be his own, if he is not *self-existent*. And nothing in this Record will prove him self-existent, if the 7th Verse is not part thereof. But by the 7th Verse Christ is declared to be the same self-existent Spirit or Substance with the Father ; and yet a Person distinct from the Father. It is Self-existence makes his Blood his own ; his distinct Person makes it not the Father's. And *thus the Record sets forth our Eternal Life to be granted by the Father, for a valuable Consideration paid by the Son, who in his own Person came for that Purpose, in the Blood, Οὗτος ὁ ἐλθὼν δι' αἱμάτων Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστός, This Person is he who came — by the Blood, and so is the Saviour, the Anointed. This Person who is the Son of God, by the Words preceding the Record, and the ὁ Λόγος [The Word] by the Record itself.*

3. **The End** for which *this Record is produced, shews it must have the 7th Verse.* Without it we cannot know we believe in the Son of God, and that we have eternal Life, *from anything in this Record.* There is not one word which will determine what kind of Person is coming in the Water, and in the Blood, much less that the Person who thus comes is self-existent ; so that we do not know what to believe concerning

cerning the Son of God, and can have no Assurance of Eternal Life by him. — Neither —

4. — Will it appear hereby, that *the Anointed Saviour, who comes in the Water and the Blood*, is Omniscient and Omnipotent; that he *has the Knowledge of what we desire, and Power to do for us accordingly, when, according to his Will, we put up our Prayers to his Person.*

Therefore since, by the 7th Verse, the Son of God is declared, by the Term *ὁ Λόγος* [*the Word*] to be a Person distinct from the Father, and the same Substance with the Father; and since the Term *ὁ Λόγος* [*the Word*] was well known to be the Title of the Son; and since the Unity of the Substance, and Distinction of Person, must be known to give us a Foundation for Faith in him, that he has redeemed us, and will grant our Prayers, and that the Father has given us eternal Life by him, and that his testifying this by his coming in the Water and in the Blood is the Testimony of God the Father; I humbly submit it, whether I may not conclude *the Record is defective without the 7th Verse, and therefore that the 7th Verse was in it Originally?*

§. VI. I know very well the common Interpretation makes the Term Πνδμα [Spirit] in ver. 6. *the Holy Ghost*; Ενειν το πνδμα τ αληθείας [*that Person the Spirit of Truth*] John xvi. 13. But the Construction will not bear this Interpretation, ΕΝ [the Word **One**] in ver. the 8th. refers to Πνδμα [the Word **Spirit**] in ver. 6. and the το υδωρ & το αιμα [*Water and Blood*] in that Verse cannot be either εν [*One Thing*] with the Holy Ghost, or εις το εν πνδμα [*in that one Spirit*] if it signifies the Holy Ghost. Neither will such Interpretation make the Record and the Account agree. The Testimony of the Holy Ghost cannot be the Testimony of God the Father, unless by the 7th Verse they are both εν πνδμα [*One Spirit*;) which overthrows that Interpretation.

§. VII. The Interpretations given to the Terms *Water and Blood*, το υδωρ & το αιμα, I shall not repeat to one much more conversant than I am in this Learning; only I beg Leave to support my own Acceptations as far as they are my own.

A. I have already noted, the *Water in which Christ came*, is by the Inspired Author made very distinct from the *Blood in which he came*.

The

The remaining Question is, *Whether the Water is that Shecinah שכינה or Tabernacle in Human Shape in which Christ appeared to the Patriachs?* That Tabernacle is called *The Dark Water*, Pf. xviii.

II. He made his Pavilion round about *the Dark Water* and thick Clouds to cover him,

ישרו השד סתרו סביבותיו חשכה - מים עבי שחקים.

This Passage may very justly be referred to the Appearance in which the Patriarchs and Prophets saw the God of *Israel*. And then, *First*, because that Appearance may justly be called *Water*. *Secondly*, because the God of *Israel* is the Son of God. Therefore, *Thirdly*, the Expression in the Text, — This is he that came, *וזה הוא אשר בא* [by *Water*,] may justly be referred to *that Shecinah in which Christ appeared before his Incarnation*.

I. The History of that Appearance will shew how justly it is called *Water*.

(I.) It was formed in the *Splendor of the Holy One, out of the Womb, before the Morning*, by what may be called *Condensation*, Pf. cx. 3. בהררי קרש מרחם משחר לך של ילדת. This was spoken to Christ, being made Priest after the Order of *Melchisedec*, much Prior to the Order of *Aaron*, even before the World began. And being out of the *Womb before the Morning* (before the Morning

Morning Star, as the LXX.) these Particulars will confine the Phrase — *Dew of thy Birth* — to that Appearance. And then [that] Appearance being stiled in Psal. xviii. as before, עֵבֶי שְׁחָקִים *The Condensations of the Æther*, one may venture to say, *it was formed by Condensation*.

And thus it agrees with the *Formation of Water*, which, by the Resolution thereof into Air, the Business of every common Fire is proved to be Originally *Condensed Air*.

(2.) It was at the Incarnation *resolved into the same Splendor, out of which it was at first formed*, Phil. ii. Christ being ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ, In that Appearance in which God appeared till that Time ἐκένωσε ἑαυτὸν *exinaniit seipsum, [empty'd himself,]* which could not be done, *Sit Verbo Venia*, but by a Resolution thereof into its first Principles.

(3.) Agreeable to this the God of Israel is stiled יהוה בהדרת — קדש Psal. xxix. 2. *Jehovah in the Splendor of the Holy One*, referring to that inaccessible Light in which he dwells eternally. And again, עַר בְּשֹׁחַק נִאֲמָן Psal. lxxxix. 38. *The faithful Witness in the Æther*, or Dew, referring to the Condensation of that Brightness. *The Faithful Witness*, is
D a Title

a Title claimed by Christ in the Revelations.

(4.) And (which shall conclude this Point) He is stiled by *Job*, chap. xxvi. 6. *The Water*, or *Shecinah of Water*. The Original evidently is, *The Gyants groan under the Water*, even under the *Shecinah thereof*, *Hell is naked before him*, &c.

2. If it were not for something lately advanced by Dr. Clarke, I should not think it necessary to prove the God of *Israel* to be the Person of the Son: But now as Matters stand, I must beg your Patience, (1.) In *Psal.* 2. the same Person who is the Lord, מלכי dwelling in the Heavens, is the Son to day begotten. And in *Psal.* lxviii. the Lord dwelling in the Heavens, is the God of *Israel* ascending, which is Christ, *Eph.* iv. and even by the 2d Psalm set by himself King, on his Holy Hill of *Sion*. מלכי must be render'd me Regem [I have set my self King] putting the Pronoun in the Primitive Sense, so as it ought to be put, *Isa.* liii. — by the Knowledge of him, shall my Righteous Servant justify many. For the same Person, who says, yet have I set מלכי [my self King] upon my Holy Hill of *Sion*, says also, *The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my*

my Son. --- (2.) *The Word of the Lord*, Gen. xv. 1. is evidently *the God of Israel*, chap. xvii. (3.) *The God of Israel* is the *Holy One*, and Christ is the *Holy One*, Psal. xvi. (4.) *The God of Israel*, is the Redeemer of *Israel*, Isa. 44. which is the peculiar Office of Christ. (5.) *The God of Israel* is the Judge, Psal. l. 6. Another peculiar Office of Christ, John v. 23. More might be said, but I hasten.

The Objection, from that which *the Word of the Lord* says to Nathan, *Go and tell David, The Seed that shall come out of thy Loins, — I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son*; which speaks of Christ, is thus answer'd: It is not Father, but *instead of a Father*: And so render'd by the LXX. which the Ep. to the Hebrews has made Authentick. *The Custom of the House of Israel, makes the Predecessor the Father, and the Successor the Son.* Thus the Second Brother's Son, by the Widow of the deceased elder Brother, is not his, but the elder Brother's Son. And the *ו* [or *Hebrew Particle*] is not prefixed without some Intimation. And when Christ says of himself, *What if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend*, εἰς τὸ πρῶτον, [unto that which was before] he may be understood to speak of that State in which

he sat as Lord over all in the Heavens,
 ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ, [*In the Form of God, or
 Appearance, and State of the God of Is-
 rael.*]

3. Therefore I conclude this Point
 well proved ; yet because I have no Au-
 thority but my own Observation, *I hum-
 bly submit it.*

B. I persuade my self, I need not prove
 the term *Blood*, to signify *the human Na-
 ture* ; the term itself is thus used by
 St John in his Gospel, chap. i. *Who were
 born not of Blood.* — It is true, the
 term there is in the Plural Number, and
 here is in the Singular : But this could
 not be otherwise, for Christ himself is
 only of Blood, One Blood, that of the
 Blessed Virgin *Mary* ; but every other
 Man is of Bloods, both Fathers and Mo-
 thers.

C. Vid. *Ephes. i. & alibi passim.*

Thus, Reverend Sir, in as few Words,
 and as much Order as my Ability and
 Avocations permit, I have presumed to
 lay before you my humble Opinion for
 the Authenticity of the Text in Question ;
 let me add, I cannot foresee any Objection
 from any side, but *Sabellianism*. *Nothing can
 make the Record* [without the 7th Verse]
*and the Account thereof agree, but this As-
 sertion,*

sertion, *That the Father and Son and Spirit, are One only Person.* Which by this Record and Account thereof in ver. 9. is, if we omit the 7th ver. manifestly affirmed. The Testimony of the *Spirit*, if that term signifies *the Holy Ghost*; and of the *Water* and *Blood*, are by ver. 9. the Testimony of God the Father, which requires their being One Nature, or One Person; they cannot be the former. [*by any thing appearing without the 7th Verse.*] Ergo. —

§. VIII. Shall I conclude with a Conjecture how the Text came to be *erased*, and kept out of some Copies, which I desire may have no more Weight than it brings with it. *The Alogiani*, mentioned by St. *Austin*, to reject the Gospel and Revelation of St. *John*, may justly be charged with first expunging this Text. The Epistle itself may be judged too well known to be rejected; and they who controverted the Two Whole Books aforementioned, cannot be supposed not audacious enough to expunge one Text. The People of *Sabellius's* Opinion, which St. *Austin* carries up to the first Century, or near it, may be very justly charged with using such Copies of this Epistle as were without this Text: And then it will be no Objection, that the Fathers in the Third Century

Century made so little Use of, in their Controversies with *Arius*; since they must first have proved it Authentick, which the Brevity of their Discourses would not admit. *Some Greek Copies had it in St. Cyprian's Time.* His Version is express, and cannot be imagin'd to be a Version of the 8th Verse; if that had been intended by him, a Literal Version of Πνεῦμα ὕδωρ & αἷμα [by the Latin Words, signifying Spirit, Water and Blood,] would as well have answer'd his Argument for the Unity of the Church; and his supposed Allegorical Version of those Words, will prove nothing for him, till he had first explain'd and prov'd his Exposition, which he has never done. *The Copies of best Repute in Greek had it in St. Jerom's Time, or later, if the Prologue to the Seven Canonical Epistles is not his.* Bishop Stillingfleet has noted that Author to be, — if the Greek Manuscripts had it not when he wrote that Prologue.

This, Reverend Sir, being much more than I thought at first to have written, shall not farther press upon your Time. If any thing wants Explanation, I am ready to do it, but must in such Case beg a Copy, or the Return of the Original, having not had Leisure to make one. If
you

(23)

you think fit to shew this to any one, I
desire my Name may be first obliterated,
having nothing in View, but to be,

Reverend Sir,

*Dec. 20.
1716.*

Your most humble Servant.

LETTER II.

Dr. Bentley's Answer.

*Wherein he gives an Account of the
Rules by which he proceeds in his
intended Edition.*

S I R,

Trin. Col. Jan. 1. 1716.

YOURS of December the 20th came
safely to my Hands, wherein you
tell me from common Fame, that in my
design'd Edition of the New Testament,
I purpose to leave out the Verse of *John's*
Epistle 1. chap. 5. ver. 1.

About

About a Year ago, reflecting upon some Passages of St. *Hierom*, that he had adjusted and castigated the then Latin Vulgate to the best Greek Exemplars, and had kept the very Order of the Words of the Original : I form'd a Thought, *à priori*, that if St. *Jerom*'s true Latin Exemplar could now become at, it would be found to agree exactly with the Greek Text of the same Age ; and so the Old Copies of each Language (if so agreeing) would give mutual Proof, and even Demonstration to each other. Whereupon rejecting the Printed Editions of each, and the several Manuscripts of Seven Centuries, and under, I made use of none but these of a Thousand Years ago, or above, (of which Sort I have 20 now in my Study, that one with another make 20000 Years.) I had the Pleasure to find, as I presaged, that they agreed exactly like two Tallies, or two Indentures ; and I am able from thence to lead Men out of the Labyrinth of 60000 various Lections ; (for St. *Jerom*'s Latin has as many Varieties as the Greek) and to give the Text, as it stood in the Best Copies, in the Time of the Council of *Nice*, without the Error of 50 Words.

Now

Now in this Work I indulge nothing to any Conjecture, not even in a Letter, but proceed solely upon Authority of Copies, and Fathers of that Age. And what will be the Event about the said Verse of *John*, I my self know not yet; having not used all the old Copies that I have Information of.

But by this you see, that in my proposed Work, the Fate of that Verse will be a mere *Question of Fact*. You endeavour to prove (and that's all you aspire to,) that it *may* have been writ by the Apostle, being consonant to his other Doctrine. This I concede to you; and if the Fourth Century knew that Text, let it come in, in God's Name: But if that Age did not know it, then Arianism in its Height was beat down, without the Help of that Verse: And let the *Fact* prove as it will, the *Doctrine* is unshaken.

Yours,

RIC. BENTLEY.

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LETTER III.

Being a **REPLY** to **Dr. Bentley.**

Jan. 3. 1716.

Reverend **SIR,**

AFTER my Thanks for the Favour of yours, I beg leave to assure you this will be **the only Trouble** I shall give you, and therefore pray your Patience and Pardon.

You seem not to have read mine, which *aspires to prove not the Possibility, but the Certainty that St. John wrote the Text in Question*: And this not because it is *Consonant to his other Doctrine*, but because *the Argument in the Chapter evidently Requires it*. Either the Text is Genuine, or the whole Period from ver. 9. to ver. 16. inclusive, is Spurious.

You honour me with an Account of your *Motives* to this desirable Work of yours, for which **late Posterity will bless you**. These must gratify all honest Minds, because *St. Jerom* complains of the Omission of this Text from the Latin Copies, and says he has restored it
from

from the Greek. I believe his Complaint is in a Passage which is one of your Motives, The Prologue to 7 Cath. Epist. never yet proved not his, tho' violently attacked by Erasmus and F. Simon, &c.

Permit me, Reverend Sir, to add, the Authority of all MSS. besides the Autographon is at best but Conjecture; whereas the Evidence I have alledged from the Passage itself is Decisive, if I understand the Passage; which whether I do or not, is submitted. Much less can 20 MSS. or even 20,000 of the 8th Century determine what was St. Jerom's own Opinion; since, at that time the old Vulgate had retriev'd itself; nor is it certain that his Castigations ever were receiv'd; and you know how much St. Austin opposed him, and that his own new Version is not now Extant.

The Question is of a Fact; but not, Whether the 4th Century read the Text; but, Whether the Apostle wrote it? Which I think I have proved beyond Contradiction. I persuade myself you will not be byass'd by the common Evasion of St. Cyprian's Testimony. He could not use the 8th Verse in the Words of the 7th, till he had first proved those Words to be the Meaning of that 8th, which he has not attempted.

If (after all) my former *cannot obtain your Consideration*, let me beg the Favour of your returning it; for I have no Copy of it.

I have not the Honour to be of the **Christian Ministry**. But having met with Disappointments in Secular Affairs, am the more desirous to secure an Eternal Interest; and my *Thoughts of the Influence of this noble Passage thereupon*, have created you this and the former Trouble, from,

Reverend S I R,

Your most humble Servant, &c.

An Account of what may be expected in Dr. Bentley's intended Edition, if he keeps to his own Rules.

Wherein the true Reading of St. Matthew in Chap. xix. 17. and Chap. xxvii. 9. is attempted to be decided.

MY Reply to the Dr. being in Confirmation of what I had asserted, but being drawn up in haste, and as short
as

as I could make it, I shall now a little enlarge upon it, and submit the Whole to the impartial Reader.

The Doctor asserts in his Letter,

1. *That if St. Jerom's Latin Exemplar could be come at, it would be found to agree exactly with the Greek Text of the same Age.* — And therefore —

2. *The old Copies, if so agreeing, would give mutual Proof, and even Demonstration to each other.*

3. *That the Greek and Latin Copies of the Seventh Century are so agreeing.* And therefore —

4. *That the Latin Copies of that Century are the Copies which St. Jerom corrected.* And consequently —

5. *That the Greek Copies of the Seventh Century agreeing with those Latin Copies, must be from the best Copies of the Fourth Century.* And consequently —

6. *Able to lead us thro' the Labyrinth of all the various Readings.* And,

7. *Particularly to determine the Authority of the Text in Question.*

§. II. A distinct Consideration of those Particulars may shew (if not the Fallacy of the Argument, yet) the Necessity of using other Methods, besides those Copies, for the
very

very desirable End proposed by this Reverend and Learned Man, in his most laudable Enterprize.

1. *It is agreed, that St. Jerom's Latin would agree with the best Greek Copy of that Age. Whether, by the Term, St. Jerom's Latin, be meant his Castigations of the Vulgate, or that New Version of his (not now Extant) which he made when he thought the Vulgate too full of Errors to be amended as it ought ?*

But here I must observe to the Reader, *There is all the Reason in the World to conclude for the Text in Question, from the Greek Copies St. Jerom used. In his Prologue to the Seven Catholick Epistles, he complains of the Omission of it by some Latin Copies. The Reader will find the Prologue in all the Vulgate Latin Printed Bibles, till about the middle of the Sixteenth Century, and a Defence thereof in Bishop Fell's Notes upon St. Cyprian, de Unitate Ecclesiæ. And I am in hopes Dr. Bentley takes this Prologue for one of the Passages in St. Jerom, that gave him the first Thought of his Enterprize.*

2. *But yet I am apprehensive this Agreement of St. Jerom's Latin with the best Greek Copies of the Fourth Century, will be no Foundation for a General Conclusion*

clusion in behalf of all the Greek and Latin Copies which agree together, tho' they be older than the Seventh Century. But other Considerations must be had to determine the Precedence for a various Lession besides such Agreement.

The Latin Copies in St. *Austin's* Time had a various Lession in St. *Matthew*, chap. xxvii. 9. *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the Prophet, &c.* Some omitted, and others retain'd the Word *Jeremiah*. The greatest Part of the Prophecy is expressly read in *Zechariab*. It is St. *Austin* who tells us some old Copies omitted the Word *Jeremy*. And I will suppose, for once, the Doctor's old Copies of 1000 Years omit it likewise. And if they do, I question not but to prove they are all faulty, and have omitted the Word *Jeremy*, which the Evangelist did most certainly put down. The Text is, ver. 9. *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, saying, And they took the Thirty Pieces of Silver, the Price of him that was valued, whom they of (or some from among) the Children of Israel did value; 10. and they gave them for the Potter's Field, as the Lord appointed me.*

[1.] The

[1.] The Prophecy contains Four Particulars.

(1.) The Money paid to *Judas*.

(2.) The Purchase bought for that Money of *Judas*.

(3.) The Money paid to the Potter.

(4.) The Reason of paying that Money to the Potter.

[2.] It must be observed, that in the recital of Prophecies in the New Testament, there are often two or more Prophecies put together. Thus in *Acts* i. 20. from *Psalms* lxxix. 26. and *Psalms* cix. 7. so also *Matth.* xxi. 5. from *Isa.* lxxii. 11. and *Zech.* ix. 9. And yet the Latin Gospel says, *per Prophetam* [by the Prophet] *in the Singular Number*; and the Greek consenting, says, Ἀπὸ τοῦ Προφήτου [by the Prophet] *in the Singular Number also*; so again in other Places.

[3.] In the recital of the Prophecy before us, *the Three first Particulars are evidently in Zech. xi. 7, &c. and therefore he need not be named*; but the *Fourth Particular being in Jeremiah, not in express Words, but in Typical Representation only, and yet being so evidently Typify'd as to declare thereby the Reason of paying that Money to the Potter*; it was necessary to name the Prophet Jeremy, that
so

So the Purchase of the Potter's Field may appear foretold, which is not at all mentioned in Zechariah, and yet was the most notorious Part of the Transaction. This will appear from the recital of the Prophecies, Zech. xi. 7. &c. And I (saith the Lord Jehovah, ver. 6.) will feed the Flock of Slaughter, even you, O poor of the Flock: And I took unto me two Staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands. — And I took my Staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break the Covenant that I had made with all the People. And it was broken in that Day; and so the Poor of the Flock that waited upon me, knew that I (was) the Word of Jehovah.* And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my Price; and if not, forbear: So they weighed for my Price Thirty Pieces of Silver. And the Lord said, Alas, † cast it to the Potter, (even) the goodly Price that I was prised at by them; and I took the thirty Pieces of Silver and cast them to the Potter, in the House of the Lord. Then I cut asunder mine other Staff, even Bands that I might break the Brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

† The Hebrew is *כי דבר ידוה הוה* quod ipse verbum Jehova, that I the Word of the Lord.

‡ The Hebrew is *אלי* which in Joel i. 8. is render'd Mourn ye.

Now this Prophecy evidently foretels, (1.) *The paying 30 Pieces of Silver*; (2.) *for the Purchase of the Messiah, the Word of the Lord*; and, (3.) *the rejecting that Money, and casting, or proffering it to the Potter*: But here is not one Tittle of **what it was proffer'd for to the Potter**. This was foretold by Jeremiah, in a more obscure manner, which therefore **does of necessity require** the naming that Prophet. The Passage in Jeremiah is this, *Jerem. xxxii. 6. &c. And Jeremiah said, The Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Behold Hanameel the Son of Shalum, thy Uncle, shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my Field which is in Anathoth, for the Right of Redemption is thine to buy it. So Hanameel, my Uncle's Son, came to me — according to the Word of the Lord — Then I knew that this was the Word of the Lord, and I bought the Field. —*

Jeremiah, just before the Captivity, according to the Command of God, buys a Field of Hanameel; and this, by St. Matthew, is declared to be a Prophecy of the Application of the Money which was returned, after it had been the Price of the Messiah. The Evangelist has Three Authorities for so doing, First, The immediate Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, (but this was

was no Proof against them that deny'd such Inspiration in him.) *Secondly*, The known Maxim, *that the whole History of the Jews was Typical*. And, *Thirdly*, The known Method of the Jews, in explaining Prophecies by Permutation of the Letters, according to known and stated Rules, by which the Hebrew Letters of *Hanameel* in *Jeremiah* are exchange'd for the Letters of *Hajotzer* the Potter in *Zechariah*. And thus, The Word of the Lord to *Jeremiah*, to buy the Field of *Hanameel*, just before the Babylonish Captivity, becomes a Prophecy, That a Field shou'd be bought of the Potter, just before the Destruction of Jerusalem. And then the Case of *Jeremiah* at that time (which made it even the parting with his Blood, to buy that Field, as the Lord appointed him) most evidently attaches this to the Prophecy of *Zechariah*, which foretold the Money paid for the Price of the Messiah's Blood, (for him who is the Word of the Lord) should be given to the Potter, but does not say for what Purpose.

And here the various Lession may be determin'd by the Custom of naming only one Prophet, when two are cited. And the no Occasion for naming *Zechariah*, because the Words in his Book are express. And the absolute Necessity of naming *Jeremiah*, because the Prophecy in him lies hid in Typical Representation, and more mysterious consonancy of Letters, according to Rules of Art known among the Learned, but not among the People. And because the laying out this Money to purchase the Potter's Field to bury Strangers in, made the fulfilling of *Zechary's* Prophecy notorious to all the World. That Field being called *Acel-damah*, the Field of Blood, unto this Day.

But whether the Agreement of Latin and Greek Copies of the 4th Century, in omitting the Word Jeremiah, if they had agreed therein, as they do not, can determine the Justness of such Omission against the Copies that read the Word, is now submitted to the impartial Reader.

3, 4, 5. And now also I submit it, Whether An Agreement between the Greek and Latin Copies of the 7th Century, can determine the Latin Copies of that Century to be the Genuin Latin of St. Jerom, or the Greek ones of the same Century to be taken from the best of the 4th Century? And —

6. Whether they are sufficient, by their sole Authority, to lead us out of the Labyrinth of the various Readings?

There may be various Readings in the Greek, which may be well enough expressed by one and the same Latin Phrase. For Instance,

St. Matt. xix. 17. In Origen's Time was read in some Copies, *Τί με ἰρωτάς τοῦ τῷ ἀγαθῷ;* and in others, *Τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν;* Either of which may be well expressed by the Latin, *Quid me interrogas de bono?* Why dost thou ask me concerning the Good? Which was the Reading in St. Austin's Time. And yet it is of great Consequence to confirm the former Greek Reading; for this Gospel being originally Hebrew, and therefore not ambiguous in the Expression, the Version thereof by Phrases not liable to any Ambiguity, would determine the Parallels in other Gospels that are ambiguously expressed. And then, *Τί με λέγεις Ἀγαθόν* in St. Mark, And, *Quid me dicis Bonum?* must be render'd, *Why speakest thou to me* (or asketh thou me) *of the Good?* [Which, who so does, will thereby

thereby merit eternal Life;] *there is none so Good, but One Person, (even Christ, PL. 49. 5.) and that One Person is God.* For the Greek, *Τί με ἐρωτᾷς ὅτι τὸ ἀγαθόν*, in St. Matt. cannot be otherwise render'd. But now that Reading cannot be confirmed by the Consent of the Latin; that consents to both, and argues only the private Opinion of the Interpreter. That which must determine it must be the following Words in the same Clause, compared with the Accounts of the Person who solely is so Good as to merit eternal Life by his Goodness. And consequently cannot reprove the Man for calling him Good, but must do so for thinking any Body, but Christ, who is the Self-existent Independent Being, could merit eternal Life, by being Good; for all derived Beings are Servants; and after all, we must say, — *We have done what was our Duty, and are unprofitable Servants, — Can merit nothing.*

So that one may conclude the Greek Interpreter of St. Matthew's Hebrew put it, *Τί με ἐρωτᾷς ὅτι τὸ ἀγαθόν*; *Why asketh thou me concerning that Good?* And that the Latin Interpreter had the Copy which was so put; and that the various Lession was afterwards from some *Sciolus*, who had a mind to make the Gospels consonant in Expression.

7. I have said enough in my *First Letter*, to prove the *Doctor* cannot justly omit the Passage in Question, 1 *John* v. 7. by the Agreement of his Greek and Latin Copies of the 7th Century, if they do so agree, which does not appear. But since there is another various Lession in the Text, some Copies omitting the Words — *In Heaven*; it may be proper to say something about that in this place.

The

The Word in Heaven, in the Text, may be properly referred to the making the Covenant or Decree for the Salvation of Men, by the Death of Christ, which was done before the Foundation of the World, *before the Morning*, Ps. cx. as noted above. And now if we take the Term *Witness* for *Party to the Deed*, as it was when this Epistle was wrote; then the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost were Witnesses in Heaven before the World began; but the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood, not Witnesses till afterward upon Earth. And then the Omission of the Word in Heaven is faulty also.

§ III. And this may suffice to prove, that whoever would give us a perfect Copy of the Greek Testament, and lead Men out of the Labyrinth of various Lectiōs, must not depend upon the Agreement of Copies of the Latin with the Greek, how old or numerous soever, but have recourse to other Considerations, as the Subject of the Place or Question may require; without which, a Decision on any side from such Agreement may as well fix an Error, as determin for the Truth, and at most is but meer Conjecture on either Side.

F I N I S.

